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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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S-E-C-R-E-T

50X1-HUM

COUNTRY USSR (Latvian SSR)

REPORT

SUBJECT Observation of Harbor Installations
and Naval Vessels at Ventspils

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REFERENCES

DATE OF
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1. Two reports on harbor installations and naval vessels observed at Ventspils, accompanied by sketch maps pinpointing the observations. 50X1-HUM
2. The reports contained sightings of the following naval vessel in the harbor at Ventspils: 50X1-HUM
 - a. [] four seemingly new vessels 50X1-HUM
 - b. [] eleven probably KRONSHTADT-class submarine chasers. 50X1-HUM
the latter three had blue bands around their stacks.
 - c. [] four probable SASHA-class minesweepers 50X1-HUM
 - d. [] ten probable KRONSHTADT-class submarine chasers. 50X1-HUM
bands around their stacks.
 - e. [] twelve probable KRONSHTADT-class submarine chasers; six of them flew gre 50X1-HUM
and the other six flew red naval flags. Two of the latter group had blue bands around their stacks.
 - f. [] five probable SASHA-class minesweepers flying red naval flags, three minesweepers had 50X1-HUM
 - g. [] an old naval vessel 50X1-HUM

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STATE	X ARMY	# X NAVY	# X AIR	# X FBI	AEC				
(Note: Washington distribution indicated by "X"; Field distribution by "#".)									

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h. [redacted] three probable KRONSHTADT-class submarine chasers,
in addition to the vessels
cited in paragraphs e, f, and g. The probable KRONSHTADT-class
submarine chasers [redacted] cited in
paragraph e were not sighted at this time.

50X1-HUM

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1. [redacted] a probable MTB [redacted]

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3. A slight description of port controls and a description of the usual
port installations at Ventspils were also included in the report.

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[redacted]

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1. On various occasions in February and March 1959, a number of naval vessels were seen in Ventspils Harbor. Using the attached sketch, the vessels have been listed in order. The summary is followed by the descriptions of the vessels.

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	Area No.:	No. of Vessels:
a.	15	6, poss. 8
b.	11	4
c.	11	4
d.	10	4
e.	9	4
f.	9	5
g.	10	6
h.	11	5
i.	10	7
j.	11	4
k.	11	4
l.	10	6
m.	9	ST CREF 1

50X1-HUM

~~SECRET//NOFORN//CR~~Description:

Re "a": the vessels lay tied up two by two [redacted] The 50X1-HUM vessels were alike, for the most part, their size being about 500 brt (gross tons) and they were low and flush-decked. There was one gun on the fore deck and one, possibly two, on the afterdeck. The bridge was located fairly far forward. On top of the bridge was a bar-mast having a number of antennas. Just aft of the bridge structure was a low smokestack with an angled top. [redacted]

[redacted] Two 50X1-HUM of the ships looked as though they were lying in dry-dock

Re "b": Vessels were alike, size estimated at being about 600-700 brt.

[redacted] The 50X1-HUM vessels appeared to be new. They were flushdecked with a fairly marked spring towards the ends, so that the stern appeared to be quite high. It was not possible to see any arms, but on the foredeck, where normally there would have been a gun, there was something resembling a gun-turret covered with a tarpaulin. On either side of the turret were placed six or seven cylindrical objects that stood vertically. Each object was barely two meters long, about twenty inches in diameter, and was a reddish-yellow color. A similar grouping was observed just aft of the smokestack. The bridge structure covered about a third of the 50X1-HUM length of the vessel. The forward part of the bridge had a few small elevations, and in the middle stood a fairly high three-legged mast with radar antenna at the top. The vessels had a smokestack that was low and was located just aft of the 50X1-HUM bridge. 50X1-HUM

Re "c": The vessels were alike and were flushdeckers. [redacted]

[redacted] Sweeping equipment was observed on the afterdeck of the vessels, among this being paravanes. [redacted]
the ships were minesweepers.

Re "d": These ships were assumed to be patrol boats. They were flush-decked and had a gun on the foredeck. The bridge was the only superstructure.

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50X1-HUM

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3.

A low smokestack was located just aft of the bridge. [redacted]

50X1-HUM

Re "e": The vessels were alike and [redacted] described under point "d", but seemed to be somewhat larger. Among other things, the forecastle was higher and the bow was inclined more steeply. The vessels had possibly two guns on the forward deck. The bridge seemed somewhat larger than that on the ships described in point "d".

50X1-HUM

Re "f": The vessels were alike. [redacted]

50X1-HUM

Re "g": The vessels were alike and similar to the ships mentioned under point "f," aside from the fact that the ships had a blue belt around the smokestacks. [redacted]

50X1-HUM

Re "h": [redacted] the vessels, that were all alike, as flush-decked mine-sweepers. Aft of the smokestack, the ships had a boom.

50X1-HUM

Re "i": All the ships were alike and like the vessels mentioned under point "d". [redacted] the vessels could belong to the KRONSTAD class. [redacted]

50X1-HUM

50X1-HUM

Re "j": The vessels were alike and like the ships described in point "c".

The 50X1-HUM

ships were somewhat similar to the SASHA class.

Re "k": The vessels were alike. They resembled SASHA class mine-sweepers.

50X1-HUM

Re "l": The ships were alike. All of them had a blue belt around the smokestack. [redacted] the KRONSTAD class as being the one to which the vessels could possibly belong. [redacted]

50X1-HUM

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Re "m": The ships were alike and like the vessels do.....

The ships did not have the blue belt around the smokestack.

50X1-HUM

2. Entrance and Clearance:

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Larger ships take the pilot aboard farther out,

or about three or four nautical miles off shore. the depth

at the mouth was 24 feet, but because of sea-breezes, the depth

had been reduced to 20-22 feet.

Guard duty on Soviet ships was carried out

by two armed soldiers on board the vessel.

50X1-HUM

The Nemidri-blocks outside of the harbor were not respected to any great

degree the waters were navigable.

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3. The Harbor: See attached sketch.

Explanation of the sketch:

1) Watch-tower evidently used by the entrance-pilots to watch for incoming ships.

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5.

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The surrounding area with a small harbor basin is possibly [redacted]
pilot station.

50X1-HUM

2). Possibly for fishing boats. A number of small fishing vessels about sixty-seventy feet long lay alongside the pier here.

3). Shipyards for fishing vessels. Repair shop with slipway.

4). Possibly a factory for the processing of fish.

5). Small wooden wharf, about 200 feet long.

6). A very good pier, long enough to take three commercial vessels of five-six thousand tons, lying one after the other. The wharf is equipped with transportable cranes on tracks, and the tracks are evidently connected with the main line of the railroad. Various types of railroad cars were seen on the wharf. The wharf is used both for loading and unloading the vessels.

7). Ferry pier with ferry connections to 8).

12). Ferry pier with ferry connections to 13).

14). A pier that was not as good as the one described above; long enough to take three four-five thousand tonners lying one after the other. This wharf was also equipped with portable cranes on tracks, and the tracks were connected with the main railroad lines. The pier that was used for loading and unloading was poorly equipped with warehouses to store the goods. The majority of the goods 50X1-HUM were loaded directly from railroad cars, and the same was true of the unloading.

The depth near the pier was [redacted] 24 feet [redacted] 50X1-HUM

The capacity of the cars carrying frozen fish products was very small. The agreement states that unloading will take place within 36 hours. One [redacted]

50X1-HUM

[redacted] lay there for five days because of the lack of refrigerated cars. [redacted]

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50X1-HUM

[redacted] the cars came all the way from Moscow,

where the fish were delivered.

At the inner end of the pier, ore was being loaded onto a Soviet vessel. The ore was loaded directly from railroad cars.

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50X1-HUM

15). Pier with coal crane and coal storage.

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16). Possibly a tanker. Size unknown.

17). A number of smaller piers in this area. Two, possibly three fishing-factory vessels of about 1,500 tons, lay tied up here. A number of smaller fishing vessels, about sixty-foot wooden fishing-smacks, delivered fish to the factory ships.

18). Possibly a factory in this area.

19). Possibly a bunkering station.

20). Section bridge with road and possibly railroad tracks.

21). Area in which was located a large radio station. Six fairly high radio masts were placed here.

22). This area was assumed to be a naval base. Besides the naval vessels that were tied up at 9), 10), and 11), on an earlier occasion, above the piers, a number of barrack-like casernes had been observed. Outside of these, a number of naval personnel were observed marching.

On the roof of one of the buildings, a radar antenna rotated; it was fairly small and of the type that is used on vessels. A number of small radio masts were also observed.

23). Possibly the railroad station.

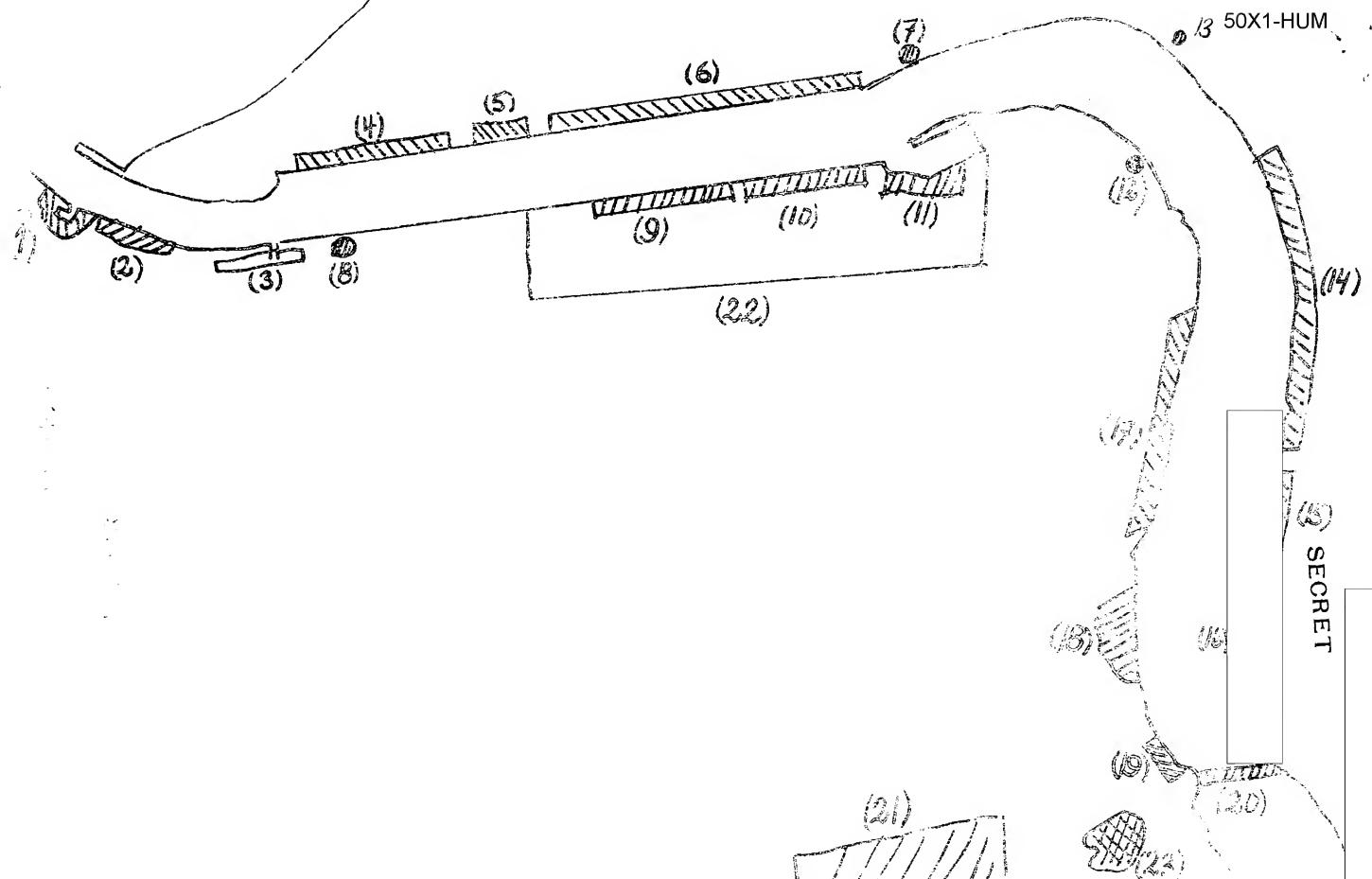
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VENTSPILS

50X1-HUM



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1. In areas (1) and (2) marked on the attached ske [REDACTED] 50X1-HUM
vessels were seen on 22 March 1959.

Description: The vessels were identical. They were small patrol boats, flush-decks, with one smokestack just aft of the box-shaped bridge. The vessels lay in two groups. Six vessels at (1) flew green flags [REDACTED] 50X1-HUM

[REDACTED] Six vessels at (2) flew red

[REDACTED] naval flags. Two of these vessels had blue belts painted around the smokestacks 50X1-HUM

Five minesweepers were seen in area (3). The vessels flew red naval flags. [REDACTED] 50X1-HUM

[REDACTED]

Farthest in the harbor basin, at (4), an old naval vessel lay.

Description: The vessel resembled the British HUNT class, but was somewhat smaller. [REDACTED] The ship had a long forecastle deck

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extending nearly half the length of the ship, one gun on the forward bridge with two steps on the forward side. There was one smokestack with an angled chimney-cap slightly aft of the bridge. On the stern deck was equipment [redacted] 50X1-HUM that possibly indicated mine-sweeping activities.

[redacted] 50X1-HUM

[redacted], the same type of vessel was observed at the aforementioned locations

A small naval vessel also lay at (7).

Description: [redacted] the vessel to be a motor-torpedo-boat. 50X1-HUM

[redacted] a length of 60-70 feet and was flush-decked, with a small and very low bridge structure. There was a high gun-turret on the forward deck, and torpedo-ejection tubes on each side. Just aft of the bridge was a grid mast with an egg-shaped object at the top.

2. DREDGING ACTIVITIES: A dredging apparatus was at work in the outer basin. It lay somewhat east of the shipping lanes. Three small diving boats lay on the same side, just alongside the lanes.

[redacted] 50X1-HUM

[redacted] 50X1-HUM

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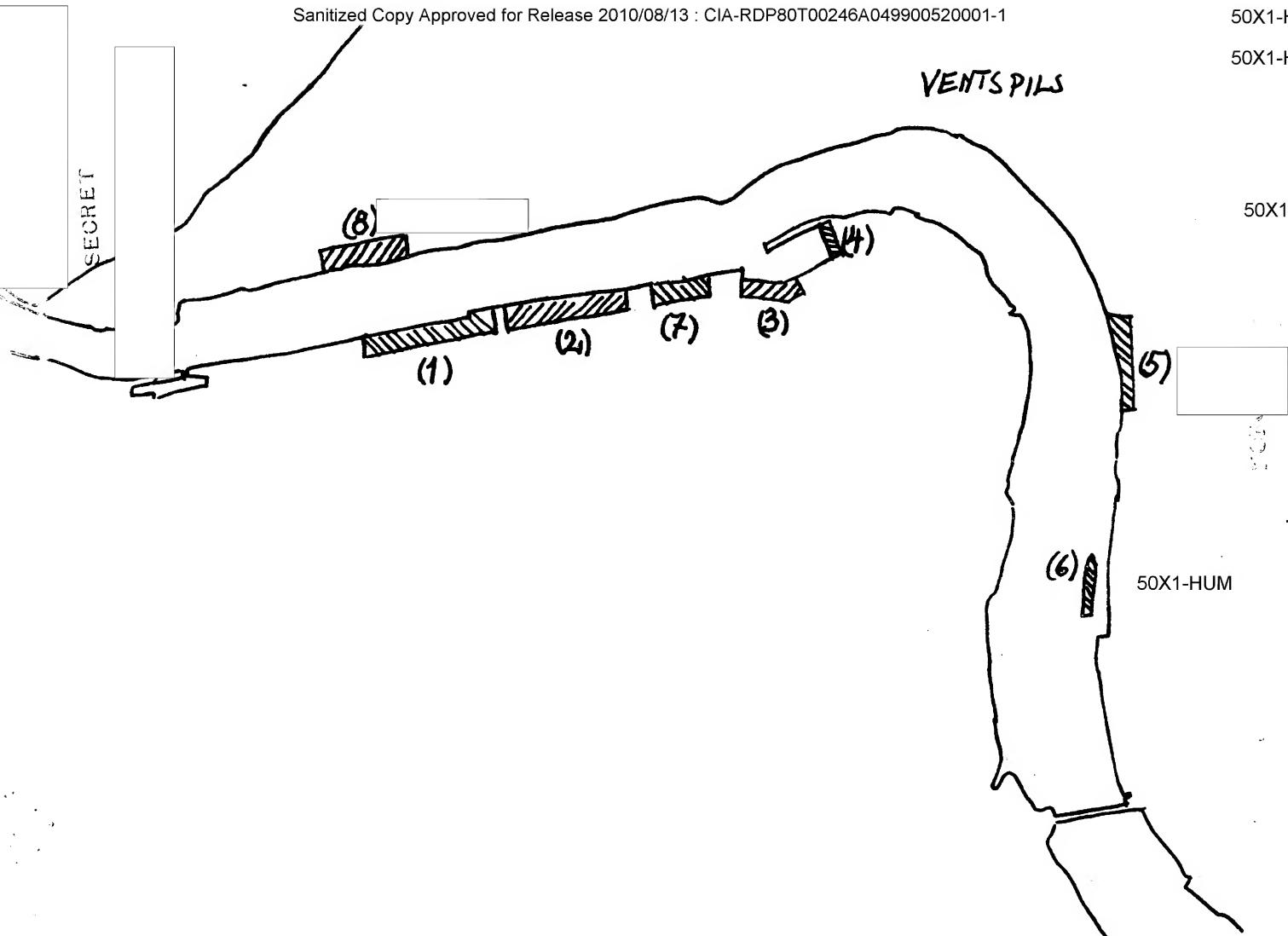
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VENTS PILS

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